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PASTORAL INSTRUCTION

TO THE

ROMAN CATHOLICS

OF THE

DIOCESS OF CORK.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND

DOCTOR *FRANCIS MOYLAN*, R. C. B.

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1798.

BRITISH MUSEUM

DOCTOR FRANCIS MOYLAN,

TO HIS

BELOVED FLOCK,

AND IN PARTICULAR

To the lower Order of the Roman Catholic Inhabitants of the Dioceſs of Cork.

IN times like the preſent, when government has declared its determination to ſuppreſs by the moſt vigorous and ſummary means, the ſpirit of inſurrection and outrage, which has manifeſted itſelf in ſome parts of this country, I ſhould conſider myſelf deficient in what I owe to you, Dearly Beloved Brethren, if I omitted to warn you of the impending danger, and of the neceſſity of adopting ſuch a line of conduct, as may prevent the exerciſe of the ſeverities of the law againſt you. Charged as I am, by Almighty God, with the care of your ſouls, intereſted as I moſt warmly feel in whatever regards you, it is my bounden duty to remove as far as in my power, any deluſion

under which you may at any time labor, and to appriſe you of whatever might tend either to obſtruct, or to promote your temporal and eternal welfare. In the preſent critical ſtate of our country, in the preſent unhappy temper of ſome men's minds, and under the threats of perſonal violence, with which I have been menaced, the timid precautions ariſing from perſonal conſideration, might ſuggeſt and recommend a ſilent obſervation of paſſing occurrences; but as you, Dearly Beloved Brethren, are the firſt object of my Paſtoral ſolicitude and care, and dearer to me *than life*, nothing could diſſuade me from addreſſing to you my admonitions, but the apprehenſion of their not proving, in the actual ſtate of the public mind, as extenſively uſeful as I ſhould expect, and that their deſign might be miſrepreſented by thoſe enemies of all good order and religion, who have of late ſo induſtriouſly ſought to inſinuate themſelves into your confidence. Truſting, however, in the Lord, that you will receive this addreſs in the ſame ſpirit in which I write it, (and God knows it is your good only I have in view) I beſeech you, Beloved Brethren, and exhort you as your ſpiritual Father, and your ſincereſt Friend, to weigh well and conſider your preſent ſituation. It is not to political diſcuſſion, but to religious reflection, I mean to call your attention, and therefore ſhall forbear

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to enquire into the original cauſe or cauſes of the preſent unhappy ſtate of our country: the deciſion of this queſtion would anſwer no purpoſe for you, were it as obvious as it appears complicated. But ſurely, the firſt Principles of our holy Religion, as you have learned it in Chriſt Jeſus, inculcate and enjoin obedience to the laws, and reſpect for the conſtituted authorities—that ſecret aſſociations for the ſubverſion of the order and peace of ſociety, are unlawful and criminal, and that the guilt of ſuch combinations is highly aggravated by attempting to confirm their engagements by the ſanction of an oath—for an oath, my brethren, is a religious act—it is a ſolemn appeal to God, as the witneſs of the truth of what we declare, and the avenger of what is falſe or evil; when we take a juſt and lawful oath, propoſed by ſuch as are inveſted with competent authority, we honor God—we teſtify our reverence and veneration for his Divine Majeſty, as the Infallible Truth, that cannot be deceived, and as the juſt puniſher of unrighteouſneſs and falſehood. But an oath that is either falſe, or taken to bind to the perpetration of any thing wicked, is the groſſeſt and moſt direct affront to God—it is a ſacrilegious profanation of his Adorable Name—High Treaſon againſt his Tremendous Majeſty—a formal contempt of his power—in a word, braving the Almighty to his very face. Such,

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my Dear Brethren, are all oaths of combination, to the prejudice of *any* neighbour or fellow-creature, or againſt the tranquillity and good order of the community in which we live. Nothing therefore can ſanction or juſtify them. They are an abomination in the eyes of the Lord, and will infallibly, unleſs repented of, draw down the vengeance of Heaven, ſooner or later, on the wretches that are guilty of ſuch impious practices.

NOTHING can more effectually tend to bring down the judgments of God upon the country; for it is a fact, that where the practice of taking falſe or wicked oaths gains ground, all manner of crimes grow common with it, and in proportion to the progreſs it makes amongſt any people, the nearer they approach, until at length they are plunged into the gulph of deſtruction.

THAT ſuch are the neceſſary conſequences of falſe or wicked oaths, the Almighty has expreſsly declared by the mouths of the Prophets, Jeremias and Oſee.—" BECAUSE OF " SWEARING THE LAND MOURNETH," ſays Jeremias; and Oſee ſets *that* down as the principal cauſe of the Lord's indignation againſt his choſen people, the children of Iſrael.—

" SWEAR-

" SWEARING, AND LYING, AND KILL-
" ING, AND THEFT, HAVE OVERFLOW-
" ED, AND BLOOD TOUCHETH BLOOD;
" THEREFORE, ſays the Prophet, SHALL
" THE LAND MOURN, AND EVERY ONE
" THAT DWELLETH IN IT SHALL LAN-
" GUISH." How applicable, alas! theſe awful denunciations of the Almighty, and how literally have they been fulfilled in our diſtracted land.

SUCH therefore, amongſt you, my Brethren, as may have had the great misfortune of being, by the perſuaſions of artful and deſigning men, deluded into ſo heinous a crime, let me entreat you to follow the advice of the Prophet Ezechiel, *Be converted and do penance for all your iniquities, and iniquity ſhall not be your ruin. Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions, by which you have tranſgreſſed, and make to yourſelves a new heart and a new ſpirit, and why will you die, O houſe of Iſrael?*

ASSOCIATE not with thoſe Atheiſtical Incendiaries, who would extinguiſh that horror, which every *human* breaſt muſt feel againſt the execrable crimes of robbery and murder, by which the national character has of late been attempted to be ſtained. Return to your uſual occupations of induſtry and labor, and inſtead of bewil-

bewildering your minds in ſpeculations about government, which you cannot comprehend, endeavour to realize for yourſelves and your families, the comforts which a patient and unwearied application to your reſpective avocations will not fail to produce.

To be totally exempt from ſufferings is what you cannot expect at this ſide of the grave.—No ſtate, no condition, no rank, however exalted, but has its pains, its croſſes and tribulations, and this by divine appointment. And why? becauſe this life is a ſtate of trial—we are in this, only on our way to a better world. If we conduct ourſelves well *here*, for the little time we have to remain, by diſcharging the duties of our reſpective ſtates, we ſhall certainly be unſpeakably and eternally happy hereafter. Inſtead then of indulging in fruitleſs and unſeemly murmurs, or ſeeking by unlawful methods to ſoften the hardſhips of your condition, conſole yourſelves, My Dear Brethren, with the aſſurance Religion holds out to you, that for whatever you ſuffer in *this* world, you ſhall, if it be not your own fault, be amply rewarded in the next—that the tranſient afflictions of this fugitive life, if patiently endured, are deſtined to produce an eternal weight of Glory. How powerful a motive this to conſole us, when ſmarting under the chaſtiſe-

chaſtiſements of Heaven or the miſeries of the Earth.

But whilſt I exhort you, my Brethren, patiently to endure whatever portion of evil, in the general diſtribution of Providence, may fall to your ſhare, I would have you not unmindful of the bleſſings you enjoy, and the favors you have received. Certain privileges excepted, you poſſeſs the advantages of the Conſtitution. The penal laws, under which our fathers groaned, have been almoſt all done away. You have the comfort of exerciſing your holy Religion without controul, and to the benignity of Government, and to the liberality and wiſdom of Parliament, we are indebted for the eſtabliſhment and endowment of a Roman Catholic College, on an extenſive plan, which will afford a liberal education to our youth, and a ſupply of Clergy to our Church, when the preſent generation have finiſhed their career: Theſe are bleſſings—theſe are favors, that ſhould excite and call forth our gratitude, and this gratitude we ſhould evince by a ſteady attachment to the Conſtitution, and unſhaken loyalty to our gracious Sovereign—a Sovereign, who has done more for the Roman Catholic Body, and indeed for this Kingdom in general, than any, or all of his predeceſſors. I know, Beloved Brethren, that efforts have been made by evil minded

men,

men, to weaken your attachment to the Conſtitution of your country, and your allegiance to the beſt of Kings, by circulating impious and ſeditious writings and encouraging you to outrage and riot—But in the name of God, why ſhould you be the dupes and tools of theſe wicked incendiaries? Surely they could not have your good at heart! In forwarding their ſeditious ſchemes, by diſturbing the country, you only promoted your own and your family's ruin and deſtruction, by drawing on your heads the vengeance of inſulted laws. The ſword of juſtice is not yet ſheathed, and yet obſerve how many of the ſeduced and miſguided people has it already cut off! and over the heads of how many, ſeparated by impenetrable barriers from their friends, does it ſtill remain ſuſpended! Ah! who ſhall reſtore to widowed wives and orphan children their huſbands and fathers, thus prematurely cut off! Will the miſcreants who inveigled them into the paths of infamy and ruin, come forward to indemnify and conſole the ſurviving friends, for the dreadful calamities they have brought upon them? Alas! no conſolation or indemnity will they afford. Inſtead then, of ſuffering yourſelves to be any longer miſled, take warning by the fate of thoſe victims of public juſtice, and let the declarations of lively ſorrow and contrition for violating the laws, and diſturbing the peace of the country, made with

with their dying breath, make a laſting impreſſion on your minds. Conſider the vigorous meaſures now to be enforced againſt the diſturbers of peace and good order; this country is juſt proclaimed—military law eſtabliſhed. From the known humanity of the Commander in Chief, and of the immediate Commanders of our Diſtrict, no unneceſſary rigor in the diſcharge of their duty can be apprehended, and you ſhould bleſs God that ſuch Commanders have been at this criſis appointed; their benevolent and liberal hearts feel, and make due allowance for the deviations of uncultivated nature—they know how to diſtinguiſh between the deluded peaſant, and the artful incendiary that impoſes on his ignorance and credulity. But if acts of outrage and inſubordination be perſevered in, if the abominable crimes of robbery and violence be abetted and perpetrated, if the laws be not obeyed and reſpected, then, though we cannot but ſorely lament the neceſſity, we cannot be ſurpriſed at their exerting the formidable powers with which they are inveſted, for the protection of the innocent, and puniſhment of contumacious offenders.

Let me then, Dearly Beloved Brethren, exhort ſuch of you as may have been unfortunately deceived by ambitious agitators, to return immediately

immediately to your duty—to that obſervance of the laws of the Community, by which you are yourſelves protected.—Renounce all thoſe wicked aſſociations, formed for the ſubverſion of the ſocial order and peace of the Country. By compliance with the notices publiſhed by the Commander in Chief for your information, you will avoid the heavy miſchiefs, by which a diſregard to them will be inevitably followed. As members of Society, demean yourſelvəs according to the relations of this ſtate—love, cheriſh without exception, your neighbours, and fellow-ſubjects of every denomination.—— Conſider them as your Brethren, and treat them with that kindneſs, which ſuch a ſentiment inſpires—*Do unto them*, in every reſpect, *as you would wiſh they ſhould do unto you.*—This is what our Divine Law-Giver commands—and it is only by complying with this command, that you can expect eternal ſalvation.

I AM aware that my intention in thus addreſſing you, Beloved Brethren, at this critical juncture, will be groſsly miſrepreſented by the unprincipled incendiaries who wiſh to pervert and inflame your minds.—They will aſſert, as they often did before, that I act under the influence, and as a penſioner of Government—a calumny which I always deſpiſed, and ſhould ſtill continue to conſider as unworthy of notice,

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were it not for the impreſſion that I hear this, and ſimilar falſehoods have made on the minds of ſome of the lower order of my flock.

As I hold myſelf in the ſtation I fill, *Debtor to the wiſe, and to the unwiſe*, " I do " now moſt ſolemnly declare in the preſence " of God, who ſhall judge Us all, that I " never received a penſion, or emolument, " directly or indirectly from Government— " that it was never offered, nor promiſed me " —neither looked for, nor do I expect it; " and that in the inſtructions or advices I found " it incumbent on me to give to my Flock, as " to the line of conduct I thought they ſhould " obſerve, in theſe eventful times, I was actu- " ated ſolely by a regard to their real intereſts, " and by a deſire to comply with the duty " I owe, and the ſteady, heartfelt unalterable " attachment I feel, and ever ſhall feel to my " King and my Country; and what I ſay of " myſelf on this head, I am warranted to aſ- " ſert the ſame of every Roman Catholic Bi- " ſhop of the Kingdom."

What then could be the views of the inventors, and propagators of theſe falſehoods? What end could they propoſe to themſelves? No other, moſt aſſuredly, than to impoſe on your credulity—to eſtrange your hearts and affections

affections from the Paſtors appointed by Almighty God to guide you in the ways of Salvation—to eradicate from your minds the belief of true Religion and morality, and thus to diſpoſe you to adopt thoſe Atheiſtical principles of French Fraternity, which have deluged Chriſtendom with blood and carnage—ſpread havoc and devaſtation wherever they were introduced, and which have but a few weeks back pillaged and profaned the Capital of the Chriſtian World, and robbed its peaceful and beneficent Prince, the venerable Head of our Church, of his territory and independance.

THESE are not the guides you ſhould follow—their ways lead not to life but to death —*They come to you in ſheep's clothing*, exaggerating, and then pretending to feel for your grievances; *but they are inwardly ravening wolves. Beware then of theſe falſe Prophets*, liſten to them no longer, but liſten to the Oracle of Divine Wiſdom, which commands you to fear God, and honor the King, to reſpect and obey your Rulers, to avoid evil, and to do good, to work out your Salvation in fear and trembling, and thus having conſciences void of all offence, you will inſure

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to yourſelves preſent Peace, and future Happineſs; which, may God, in his infinite Mercy, grant you all, my Beloved Brethren in Chriſt!

CORK, APRIL 26, 1798.

THE END.

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